

# NEWS RELEASE



**STATE OF ALABAMA**  
**Department of**  
**Industrial Relations**  
**News For Immediate Release**  
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## **JOBS AWAIT THOSE RETURNING FROM MILITARY SERVICE**

MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA, November 6, 2003 . . . . . Every day is Veteran's Day at the Alabama State Employment Service, while two federal laws, the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA) and the Jobs for Veterans Act, provide job assistance for the men and women who serve their country.

"It is standard practice for all Employment Service offices across the state to assign a Local Veterans' Employment Representative to assist Alabama's veterans in their job search," says Phyllis Kennedy, director of the Alabama Department of Industrial Relations. "Some offices also provide specialized employment services to disabled veterans through Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program representatives. Eligible veterans receive priority in all employment services, including referrals to job listings, job development contacts with employers, and referrals to all supportive services."

USERRA, a law passed in 1994 and updated in 1996 and 1998, requires employers to guarantee that jobs left behind by reservists and National Guard members will be waiting for them upon their return from active military service. Kennedy says U.S. Secretary of Labor Elaine Chao characterizes the intent of USERRA best: "They did their job—now let's do ours."

The Jobs for Veterans Act, signed by President Bush in November 2002, went into effect on July 1. That law provides that priority of service be given to veterans, as well as spouses of certain veterans, for the receipt of employment, training, and placement services in any job-training program directly funded, in whole or in part, by the U.S. Department of Labor.

Between July 1, 2002 and June 30, 2003, Alabama provided priority employment services to over 37,000 veterans and eligible family members. Over 12,000 veterans were placed into jobs or located work through services received from the Employment Service. Veterans comprise over eight percent of all registered Alabama job seekers.

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Industrial Relations is an umbrella organization of State government which administers: the State Employment Service, Unemployment Insurance, Workers' Compensation, and Labor Market Information. Smaller programs also administered include Abandoned Mine Land Reclamation, Mine Safety and Inspection, and Surface Mining of Non-Fuel Minerals. For more information on DIR visit the Web site: [www.dir.state.al.us](http://www.dir.state.al.us).